# Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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*"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!*
*Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;*
*And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."*
JOHN HAY.

## On Picket Duty.

Among the resolutions passed at the International Feminine Congress recently held in Paris was one providing that, in order to guarantee the family against the horrible scourge of contagious and hereditary disease, those proposing to marry should present to the legal authorities a special certificate of good health. This suggestion, of surprising and eccentric sanity, ought to commend itself to all Archists. If the State certificate of good health is not in place in the case of legal marriage, where in the relations of the sexes can it be in place? Sanitary supervision of prostitution logically necessitates sanitary supervision of marriage. Liberty is against both.

The Springfield "Republican" is surprised and grieved to find that educated men can be furious and bitter in controversy over large questions. It does not find, it says, that historians and professors and college presidents control their temper better than ordinary citizens or newspaper writers, referring to the emphatic disapproval of the Cleveland-Olney Venezuela policy expressed recently by John C. Ropes and other historians. It is curious that so unfounded a notion should obtain lodgment in anybody's mind. The facts do not support the hypothesis that education does away with controversial violence and breeds calmness and humility and sweetness of disposition; nor is there any *a priori* reason for thinking that this effect must flow from education. An educated man sees more sides to a question than a narrow and ignorant man, but the side which he thinks wrong will not get quarter from him any more than from the ignorant man. Think of such fighters as Proudhon, Marx, Huxley, Carlyle, Ruskin, Lecky, and scores of others! They are aggressive towards that which seems erroneous to them, and perfectly merciless in their treatment of perverse and mischievous champions of falsehood. If John C. Ropes thinks the Venezuela policy a "huge swindle" and "unscrupulous political trick," why should he not say so? If another educated man thinks that Mr. Ropes is himself singularly obtuse and wrong-headed in this matter, and that his charge against Cleveland is absurdly unjust, why should *he* not say so? What is there in education to prevent people from saying what they think and expressing themselves with the vigor demanded by the occasion? Nothing. If there were any such enervating and enfeebling tendency in education, it would not be the blessing for the race that it certainly is.

It is said that the series of supreme court decisions widely proclaimed as revolutionary in their effect on the railroads has produced no change whatever in the policy and tactics of the latter. The interstate commerce law and commission are as lifeless as they were before "new life and vigor" were imparted to them. But, in the first place, it is altogether too early to judge. State bodies are very deliberate, and a thousand days to them are no more than one day to a private individual. Give the commission ten years, and it may do something with its new powers. In the second place, the mere fact that the law and commission exist satisfies thousands of reformers and philanthropists. They are now engaged in earnest efforts to have more commissions created, and other laws passed. They do not wait for one to succeed before asking for another; if they did, they might never have occasion to make a second appeal to the government. Acts are nothing to them; intentions and words everything.

Mr. George A. Schilling writes to me as follows: "I fully agree with the point you make against Labadie on the subject of liberty. It is idle to say that men want liberty for liberty's own sake; they want it because of the protection, enjoyment, and development it affords them. In other words, they want it because of what there is 'in it.' But, believing this way, I cannot understand why you should insist in keeping John Hay's poem flying in the columns of Liberty, which gives the contrary impression,—'and, though thou slay us, we will trust in thee.' Of course, it may be that you could insist that the first two lines emphasize liberty's general benefits, whereas the last line indicates only sacrifices which here and there individuals may be called upon to make in her service." I must first correct Mr. Schilling's misapprehension that my point was made against Labadie. It was made against Dr. Maryson. In wanting liberty for what there is "in it" Schilling, Labadie, and I are at one,—a statement which should be qualified by pointing out that, judging Schilling from his more recent manifestations, he thinks there is little or nothing in it, and therefore wants little or none of it. Coming now to his criticism regarding the Hay motto, I need say only that Schilling, after declaring that he does not understand my adoption of it, shows, by his suggestion of a possible explanation, that he does understand it. Barring the moralistic terminology in which it is expressed, the suggested explanation is the correct one, and perfectly sound. The meaning of the Hay motto is more thoroughly to be understood by reading the entire poem of which it is the conclusion, and which, if I remember rightly, was once printed in these columns. It establishes an analogy between liberty and the sea, claiming that, just as we trust ourselves to the sea because of its manifold uses and in spite of its storms (sometimes fatal to individuals), so we should trust ourselves to liberty because of its great advantages and in spite of its dangers (also sometimes fatal to individuals). This does not mean, however, that individuals may be "called upon" to make "sacrifices" to liberty. It means simply that, just as no sensible individual allows his consciousness of the possibility of shipwreck to deprive him of the benefits of international commerce, so no sensible individual will allow his consciousness of the possibility that liberty will lead to his death to deprive him of the benefits to be derived from the policy of equal freedom. But, given an individual prizing his own life above aught else, or preferring a longer and less happy life to a shorter and happier one, and supposing in him the ability to infallibly foresee that, in his individual case, death will sooner or later result from his choice of the policy of liberty, there is no reason why he should sacrifice himself to liberty; and I certainly would not offer to such a man Hay's lines as wise counsel.

A contributor to the "Conservator," who is henceforth nameless in these columns, perpetrates the following crime against reason in a review of "Mutual Banking" from the standpoint of the fool theory that a commodity standard of value is an impossibility: "The wealth of the United States equals $80,000,000,000. If a dollar is necessarily a certain weight of gold (about 23 grains), then this expression means that this nation's wealth equals 80,000,000,000 x 23 grains, or about 4,000,000,000 ounces of gold. Now, the total gold supply of the world does not exceed, according to the best authorities, one-twenty-seventh of this amount. Hence it is very certain that the dollar as used in the estimation of values is not a certain weight of gold." I suppose, then, that, if I were to say that a certain mountain is 10 Eiffel Towers high, a commentator upon this assertion would be entitled to point out that, since the total Eiffel Tower supply of the world does not exceed one-tenth of 10 Eiffel Towers, it is very certain that the Eiffel Tower as used in the estimation of height is not a certain length represented by the structure of that name in Paris. To a man capable of framing precisely such a criticism does Horace Traubel entrust the review of a book of the importance of "Mutual Banking."

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"*In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the exciseman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel.*" — PROUDHON.

☞ The appearance in the editorial column of articles over other signatures than the editor's initial indicates that the editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers by no means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

## Mr. Salter's Defence.

II.

On no subject is more nonsense written by pseudo-sociologists and political romanticists than on the subject of "society." Most of the invasions practised and the false theories advocated are traceable to the arbitrary and confused notions formed upon the nature of society. I have already dwelt upon this matter, and shall presently have to deal with it again, but at this moment let us admit, for the sake of the argument, that the sociological metaphysicians are right in regarding society as an organism, and in contending that it has rights and duties of its own, altogether apart from the individuals composing it. By what process of reasoning do these "societarians" arrive at the curious and unexpected conclusion that the majority stands for and represents society? They are, one and all, guilty of this logical lapse, and it is interesting to know how the substitution is theoretically justified by them. In this article we are to inquire how Mr. Salter bridges the chasm.

True, Mr. Salter now declares that the term organism is misleading, and might have been omitted without injury to his argument. The question, however, is not one of terms, but of conception. In his book Mr. Salter stated that Spencer "makes use of the conception of society as an organism" in a "very imperfect way," but fails to point out wherein the conception fails of perfection. Spencer not only does not question, but lays great stress on, the fact that societies are *not* "a lot of individuals situated alongside of one another," but individuals held together by many bonds and feeling themselves one. He simply points out that the dissimilarities between societies and real organisms are more fundamental and important than the similarities, and that society has neither brain, conscience, or will. If this is "imperfect," what is the perfect conception? The organism theory, which, Mr. Salter avers, is at bottom true, involves more than that men have felt and conceived themselves "as somehow bound to one another, as forming in some sense a unity"; and it is because it involves more, and is at bottom false and senseless, that Spencer and the Anarchists reject it. It is Mr. Salter who is confused on this point, not I. I do not deny that societies are more than "a lot of individuals living alongside of one another"; I fully admit the existence of the feeling of unity and solidarity and membership; but I insist that this is not the organism theory at all. Mr. Salter need not ask me *what* the organism theory is, for I do not know, and am sure that nobody else knows. Those who claim to possess the "perfect conception" of society cannot, of course, assert that society thinks and acts for itself, but they do assert that it has rights and duties of its own.

Now, as I have said, let us admit this: but how is the majority substituted for society by these theorists? Mr. Salter says that he is conscious of the "difficulty," but that there is no way of surmounting it. I cheerfully agree with him. There *is* no way, and this fact is fatal to his case. Let us see what he says by way of proving that majority rule is inevitable:

> Undoubtedly it would be better if social action could be unanimous. . . . But, practically speaking, unanimity is an ideal rarely attained. The question, then, is whether it is better that a society should act with something short of unanimity rather than not act at all. It is as with an individual in a difficult emergency,—when, for example, he must make some perilous leap or form any decision about which there are risks either way. One thought moves him in one way, and another thought moves him in another, and fear might prompt him not to act at all. But the situation may be such that he must act,—and act he does, though some of his thoughts or feelings are overborne. Thoughts or feelings are the units in the individuals; individuals are the units in a society. Sometimes the only way in which an individual or a society *can* act is by majority rule,—or at least some strong single thought or emotion that is equivalent to a majority. It is either this, or paralysis, non-action, in both cases. The only question is, then, whether a society (tribe, community, family, or whatever be the social aggregate) may act—for it is irrelevant and superfluous, and, indeed, in a way absurd, to grant that a society may act, and then to deny it recourse to the only method by which action can be effected.

Mr. Salter is really too indulgent to those who, after granting that society may act, deny it recourse to the only method by which action can be effected. Such a position is not merely "in a way absurd"; it is in every way absurd and irrational. A right which cannot be exercised is not a right. If society may act, it must be permitted to act in whatever way it is possible for it to act. But, pray, whom has Mr. Salter in mind? The observation is certainly inapplicable to *my* position, since I never granted that "society may act." I contended that, since society *cannot* act, since no one is authorized to represent it and champion its rights and claims, it is absurd to assert that it *may* act. Show me, I said to Mr. Salter, that society can act, and I will grant you that it may act. Mr. Salter fails to show that it can,—indeed, admits that it cannot,—and then asks me to swallow majority rule because this is the only way in which society can act! My respect for Mr. Salter alone prevents me from properly characterizing this process of reasoning.

Even a school-boy knows that the majority is not society. Society is "all of us"; the majority is "some of us." The majority can speak only for itself. It is manifestly absurd to claim that it speaks for "all of us," when the minority is loudly expressing its dissent and dissatisfaction. True, the majority seldom says distinctly and deliberately: "This is good for *us*, and hence it must be"; it generally says: "This is good for all of us, and therefore it must be." But, on the other hand, there stands the minority protesting and insisting that "*that* is good for all of us." How can Mr. Salter determine which truly represents society?

Only one line of argument was open to Mr. Salter, but he wisely refrained from taking it. If it could be successfully shown that, as a matter of fact, the majority has always been wiser and sounder and better than the minority, and that society has prospered in proportion as it has followed the guidance of the majority, then the majority's title or right to represent society would have to be recognized. But history bears out no such assumption, and psychology flatly negatives it. Even the ablest champions of democracy do not venture to go beyond the claim that democracy is superior to aristocracy or absolutism or any other form of "despotic" rule,—an argument pertinent enough in discussion with political conservatives, but irrelevant as against advanced individualist schools, who favor little government or none at all.

Of course, I cannot really admit, even in Mr. Salter's sense, that the only method by which society can act is majority rule. How about monarchies, absolute and constitutional? How about oligarchies and plutocracies? How about governments by the wise and educated? Each of these forms is ready to assert that the system it favors is the best method by which social action can be effected, and there is absolutely no difference in principle between those governments and majority government. Mr. Salter is committed to the proposition that the societies which have no majority rule are misrepresented by their forms of government, while in popular governments society speaks and acts through the majority. This view is altogether too extreme, and few would agree with him. Lecky, the historian, in his recent book, is inclined to question the superiority of democracy to other forms of government, and thinks it highly paradoxical to assume that the ignorant and undeveloped can rule intelligence and property. *A priori*, it would seem natural and reasonable to assume that, if any portion of the whole is to be allowed to represent it, it should be the educated and progressive minority. Not only, therefore, is it not true that majority rule is the "only" method by which social action can be effected (I am speaking from Mr. Salter's point of view), but it is by no means established that it is better than some of the other methods that have been favored by governmentalists.

The point that concerns us here, however, is that there is absolutely no foundation in reason, nature, or experience for the assumption that majority action is the action of society. The fact that "society" *cannot* act is not a difficulty which Anarchists need to trouble themselves about. If it cannot act, it is not an organism, and has no rights or prerogatives or responsibilities. In other words, it *may* not act. It is for those who contend that it *is* an

organism and *may* act to show how it can act. Since it cannot and does not speak for itself, each of us has the same right or title to assert that *he* knows exactly what is good for society, and that *his* advice should be followed.

But, argues Mr. Salter, why should we ask unanimity of society, when we do not always find it in the individual? An individual often acts because he must, "though some of his thoughts or feelings are overborne"; he is not unanimous or at one with himself. Now, individuals are the units in a society, just as thoughts or feelings are the units in an individual, continues Mr. Salter. This is very queer psychology indeed, and shows how "perfect" Mr. Salter's conception of the social organism is, and how imperfect his conception of the individual organism. Let me quote, for Mr. Salter's benefit, the following excerpt from Spencer's chapter on "The Will" in his "Psychology":

> We speak of the Will as something apart from the feeling or feelings which, for the moment, prevail over others; whereas it is nothing but the general name given to the special feeling that gains supremacy and determines action. Take away all sensations and emotions, and there remains no Will. Excite some of these, and Will, becoming possible, becomes actual only when one of them, or a group of them, gains predominance. Until there is a motive, there is no Will. That is to say, Will is no more an existence separate from the predominant feeling than a king is an existence separate from the man occupying the throne.

So long as the feelings are at war, there is no action. When one feeling, or group of feelings, gains predominance, action is determined. As Mr. Salter himself expresses it, the other feelings are "overborne." At the *moment of action* the individual or ego is not divided against himself; he acts because the strongest feeling impels and compels him. A moment later he may regret his action,—that is, another feeling has gained predominance. But it is the whole ego who acts, and not part of him.

It is hardly necessary to inquire whether anything similar to this ever occurs in the "social organism." The individuals, we are told, are the social units; but these units are never overborne; they never disappear, and there is no predominant feeling in the psychological sense. There is no social Will, in short, as there is no social sensorium. By *brute force* the majority gains *physical* predominance. It says to the minority: "You persist in thinking that you are right; we decline to continue to reason with you. Something must be done, and we propose to do what *we* think proper. Submit—or we will use force." Strange talk for an organism, verily! And very peculiar psychology is that which professes to see no difference between "social action through the majority" and individual action determined by the individual Will.

It is scarcely necessary to dwell on this point. Mr. Salter writes a great deal more on the subject, but I do not find that he adds a single new consideration to what is contained in the extract cited above. His failure to justify the assumption that majority action is social action could not possibly be more complete and absolute. Mr. Salter himself feels that he has not disposed of the difficulty, and reverts once more to the "more ultimate question whether such things as societies, properly speaking, exist." I say again that societies certainly exist, but that "society" is a scientific abstraction and the social organism theory a false and ridiculous and mischievous notion, except in the "imperfect" Spencerian sense. Mr. Salter thinks that I have not grasped the notion of society, and have not risen above the notion of independent sovereign individuals, thus implying that the two conceptions are mutually exclusive. But they are not. There is such a thing possible as a society of independent sovereign individuals, and social evolution will bring it about. Individuals in present societies are more independent and free than they were in earlier societies, and yet no intelligent person will dream of denying that modern societies are stronger, better, happier, and more harmonious than the old "despotic" societies. The fanatical religionist who believes in an established church is convinced that freedom of worship and conscience means social disintegration and decay. He is sure that those who have grasped the notion of society must believe in a State religion. Similarly, Mr. Salter, who insists that in religious matters individuals ought to be independent and sovereign, shrinks from freedom and individual sovereignty in the political and economic spheres. Anarchy in religion has not destroyed society, but Anarchy in political and economic relations is impossible in a true society! What, then, is a true society?

Mr. Salter declares that the society at the basis of the State of Pennsylvania or the formation known as the United States is a most imperfect affair, and that American society is, in fact, still in the making. That is to say, bearing in mind Mr. Salter's explanations of what he means by society, the people of the United States do not as yet feel and conceive themselves "as somehow bound to one another, as forming in some sense a unity," with the same vividness and intensity and completeness with which the French or Germans feel their unity. He is doubtless right, but surely you cannot make a society by coercing men into the kind of action which, according to Mr. Salter, is fit and proper for societies. That would be putting the cart before the horse. Societies, Spencer says, are not made; they grow. But the conditions under which they are growing now and are destined to grow in the future are radically different from the conditions which obtained in the past, and their character and actions will be correspondingly different.

I agree with Mr. Salter that societies are more, much more, than a lot of individuals situated alongside of one another, and I am sure that in the course of evolution the ties that bind individuals will grow stronger rather than weaker. But Mr. Salter begs the whole question when he assumes that, unless the majority is permitted to use coercion for certain purposes, there is no sense of unity, no true social existence. It is precisely this assumption which I emphatically deny. Life under the same conditions, exchange of thought, social, industrial, and other relations, and all the thousand and one factors and influences that are brought into play by the existence of individuals alongside each other necessarily produce that feeling of unity and solidarity which is characteristic of society. Will men cease to coöperate, directly and indirectly, for economic, social, artistic, and political purposes when invasion is done away with and individual sovereignty, within the limits of equal freedom, recognized? Certainly not; and, since this coöperation makes men social and produces the sentiments of unity and solidarity, Anarchism does not fail to provide for the perpetuation of society and the satisfaction of social needs. Mr. Salter seems to think that "sovereign individuals" cannot form a society. This is the old fallacy which identified individualism with separatism and isolation. On the contrary, it is only sovereign individuals that can make a true society, since their bonds are exclusively moral and civilized. Slaves and masters do not make a society; "free and equal" beings do. To say that the moment you deny to the majority the right to use force for any other purpose than the enforcement of equal freedom you abolish society, or reduce it to something less than it is to-day, is to imply that force makes society,—which is absurd. What becomes of commerce, science, philosophy, art, and social intercourse, to say nothing about the surviving need of organizations for defence against external and internal invaders?

One word more, and I am done with this branch of the subject. When I assert that men are sovereigns and have the right to do everything except invade, I am liable to be misinterpreted. The language is somewhat misleading, and the fact that I speak as an evolutionist should not be lost sight of. Certainly men are *not* sovereigns to-day, and do *not* fully possess those freedoms which I say belong to them. But ethical science says that they ought to have these freedoms, and that progress depends on their enjoying them in greater and greater measure. An evolutionist points out the trend of social development, the logic of events. He finds that liberty has been the mother of order and progress, and predicts a greater extension of this personal liberty. But his point of view is always social. He lays down the conditions of general progress. He does not, like the religionist and moralist of the unscientific age, insist on individual liberty in the name of some higher law that has no reference to social effects. He demands liberty for the individual because he deems such liberty essential to the normal development of *all* individuals, of society. When, therefore, his opponent, who does not believe in liberty, accuses him of ignoring society, he is guilty of the most irritating and unpardonable error. The libertarian, no less than the authoritarian, argues for and in behalf of society. Which is right in his philosophy of social progress is the question. If the propositions of the libertarian are unsound and untrue, it is incumbent upon the authoritarian to prove this by showing that coercion is essential, and that liberty would be disastrous. In other words, the discussion is shifted from ethical to practical economic and political ground. *Can* society exist without coercion of the non-invasive? *Is* liberty the first condition of order and happiness? If these questions are answered in the affirmative, the case for liberty is made out. Mr. Salter does deal with these practical subjects, and what he has to say in support of or addition to the statements in his book will be considered in another article.

V. Y.

### Liberty and Its Advocacy.

It appears from Comrade Labadie's long article on other pages of this issne that he does not want liberty for liberty's sake; that he is in favor of giving reasons for wanting liberty; that "the advocacy of liberty cannot be divorced from economic considerations"; that "each one must, to have any effect upon those to whom he is appealing, point out what in his opinion will be the results of liberty"; and that it is of especially great consequence to show the character of the influence that liberty will have in the financial sphere. This is precisely what I supposed that he would say, and what I knew him to believe. It is, however, precisely the view for which I have been contending, and precisely the opposite of the view which Dr. Maryson, in his article in No. 335, attributed, at least by implication, to Comrade Labadie.

But right here Comrade Labadie takes issue. He says that Dr. Maryson's article did not attribute to him the opposite view, and that he finds nothing in Dr. Maryson's article to which he can take serious exception. This is a matter that can be easily settled. Mr. Labadie says that he has read Dr. Maryson's article carefully; let me point him to a sentence which, despite his care, he certainly must have missed. After quoting with approval Mr Labadie's statement that "Anarchism is purely negative in its philosophy," Dr. Maryson said: "I rejoice, therefore, to find an ally in Comrade Labadie, and consider this standpoint common ground where all libertarians may honorably drop their respective economic adjuvants from their Anarchist mixture and powerfully unite 'to deny and combat the right of authority.'" Now, certainly no issue can be raised here over the word "honorably," for no one has ever claimed that it would be dishonorable to ignore economic considerations in fighting for liberty. The sentence, then, can be taken only as a declaration of the author's belief that such a policy is the proper one, a claim that Labadie endorses it, and a counsel to all Anarchists to follow it. Now I ask Mr. Labadie to place the quoted sentence beside his own declaration that "the *advocacy* of liberty cannot be divorced from economic considerations" and that it is of great consequence to show how liberty will work in finance, and tell me whether the two are consistent or mutually exclusive. If he thinks them consistent, I ask him to tell me what Dr. Maryson's words mean. Let him note, too, that I am not asking him what he thinks Dr. Maryson meant to say; I am asking him the meaning of what Dr. Maryson did say.

The point, then, which I essayed to establish at the beginning of this discussion is now clearly made out, unless Mr. Labadie can show that Dr. Maryson's words do not mean what I say they mean; and I might well rest my case at once. But, since Mr. Labadie, instead of answering my questions in that concise manner which is nearly always preferable, has indulged in numerous excursions, some of which have taken him astray, I propose to follow him in some of them, and see if I cannot lead him back to paths more rational.

We are sagely told that reasons for wanting liberty may differ widely, and still be good reasons. Nothing truer, nothing triter. I myself want liberty for numerous reasons, and some of them differ widely; and these reasons could not be less good, if, instead of being held by one person, they were held some by one person and some by another. But difference does not necessitate contradiction. If it did, then the above statement would be unsound; for two contradictory reasons for wanting liberty cannot both be good reasons. For instance, if the belief that the contest between individualism and communism which liberty would allow must end in the survival of individualism be a good reason for wanting liberty, then the belief that such a contest must end in the survival of communism cannot be a good reason for wanting liberty; for it is a necessity of logic that one of these beliefs is a mistake.

To illustrate his contention that two people may want the same thing for different reasons, Mr. Labadie very illogically takes a case where two people want for different reasons, not the same thing, but different things. He talks of the liberty to kill which a lunatic wants and the equal liberty which the Anarchists want as if these two were the same thing wanted for different reasons; whereas they are entirely different things. Therefore the illustration has no point whatever.

The paragraph regarding the Southern confederacy is extremely obscure; but, if I gather Mr. Labadie's meaning, he says that the south was justly denied the right of secession because it desired to continue slavery. Nothing more absurd, nothing more extraordinary. Does not Mr. Labadie know that the right of secession would be denied to the south to-day on the same grounds as those on which it was denied to it in 1861, although nothing could to-day induce the south to restore slavery? I make this comment simply in passing; the paragraph referred to has no relevancy that I can see.

I deny that the practice of religion and the practice of what is known as rationalism are equally good reasons for wanting liberty. The argument regarding individualism and communism applies here also.

I perfectly agree that "real propagation of Anarchism has been made" whenever we convince any one that the realization of Anarchism will afford opportunity for social experiment. This is one of my reasons for wanting liberty, and I often put it forward. I have not urged that it should not be put forward. My contention is that reasons *should* be given, not that they should not be given. Why, then, does Mr. Labadie address such an argument to me? He is not addicted to so loose thinking.

But the fact that it "permits every kind of experiment" is not to me "the strongest point about Anarchism." If under Anarchism all experiments prove fruitless, Anarchism will not be a strong thing; whereas a variety of Archism which should permit but one experiment, suppressing all others, would, if that single experiment should prove in the highest degree fruitful in happiness, be a very strong thing indeed. If I knew of no solution of existing troubles, and saw in Anarchism only an opportunity for struggle between a hundred crazy schemes that are offered as solutions, I should not be very enthusiastic over Anarchism. I look forward to it with joy, less because it will give lunatics free play (though I want them to have free play within the equal-liberty limit) than because it will give liberty to the few who are sane to carry out their plans. Mr. Labadie is deceiving himself here. I am positive, in spite of his apparent assertion to the contrary, that, if all the economic theories in which he now believes were to be shattered at one blow and he could see nothing before him but utter economic darkness, the greater part of the joy that he now feels in looking forward to Anarchism would vanish also. Now, honor bright, Labadie, wouldn't it? You and I might still favor Anarchism, but we should do so as drowning men who catch at straws. We might still hope from liberty, and you possibly a little more than I; but neither you or I could have a religious faith in it. We both now value liberty principally because we have, or think we have, a considerable knowledge of what it will enable us to do.

I do not see the pertinence of Mr. Labadie's remark about "economists." Admitting that some "economists" are not worthy of the name, in what possible way does their inadequacy qualify my view that economy has a vital bearing upon liberty? Mr. Labadie is too good-natured. After every admission in my favor to which my reasoning forces him, he seems to feel that he must place a "but" to tickle Maryson who has tickled him. And when he placed this utterly pointless one,—"but writers who differ very radically in their contentions are called 'economists',"—he was "short" on "buts." For my part, I like to see a man have the stuff in him to slap a stupid compliment in the face.

When Mr. Labadie says that "the society of the future will be composed of every imaginable kind of association for the betterment of mankind, and that the competition among them will lead to the survival of the fittest," he contradicts himself within the limits of one short sentence. If the fit survive and the unfit die, then the society of the future will not include associations of the unfit sort. When we speak of "the society of the future," we use the phrase to cover only those social elements, now in existence or yet to arise, which possess the fitness requisite to survival.

I am afraid, after all, that Mr. Labadie doesn't understand my point at all. Else he wouldn't say so many irrelevant things. Here's another irrelevancy,—his mention of his attitude toward saloon-keepers in a certain Michigan election. He seems to think that his course then in voting against prohibition just as the saloon-keepers did, though for other reasons, was contrary to such a course as I am now advocating. Why, my good comrade, it is entirely in keeping with it. If I could bring myself to believe that aught is to be gained by political action, I, in the circumstances which you describe, would do as you did. Have you really read me to so little purpose that you can suppose that, simply because Communists favor liberty, I am advising Anarchists to cease to work for liberty? In the Michigan campaign you acted contrary to Dr. Maryson's policy, not to mine. If you and the saloon-keepers had acted upon Dr. Maryson's advice, neither would have had anything to say as to the reasons for wanting "free rum," but you would have joined hands before the people,

exclaiming: "We are a band of brothers; we have dropped all economic and ethical adjuvants from our liberty mixtures, and have powerfully united to deny and combat the right of authority." I think too much of you, Friend Labadie, to believe that you did, or would do, anything of that kind. No, you said to the people of Michigan: "Give these saloon-keepers the liberty that they ask you will find that, in the long run, they will be disappointed; instead of being able, in the end, to sell more rum than now, they will sell less, for there is nothing like liberty as a promoter of temperance and self-control." That, or somethink like that, is what you said to your fellow-citizens; honor bright, now, wasn't it? And that, or something parallel to it, is what I would say to the people regarding the effect of liberty on individualism and communism.

Still another irrelevancy. Mr. Labadie reminds me that the Communists are as honest as we are, and that it is as important to them to try to show that *we* are wrong. Exactly; let them by all means show it. But that is precisely what Dr. Maryson says that they should not do. He wants them to drop their economic adjuvant, and do nothing to show the people that we are mistaken in holding that liberty will strengthen the institution of private property. Ah! my dear Labadie, why will you not understand? T.

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"Single Taxers are the only believers in clean politics." That is the cry that goes up now in Delaware. Let us see. After Henry George, is there a more prominent and truly representative Single Taxer than Tom Johnson? Surely not. What is his political record? What is he doing at present, for instance? According to the newspapers, he is straddling the financial issue in Ohio in a manner worthy of McKinley himself, expressing gold sentiments to gold men and silver sentiments to silver men in the hope that he may capture the Democratic nomination for the presidency. If these reports be true, Tom Johnson is playing anything but "clean politics." But perhaps the newspapers lie. Let us appeal to an authority, then, more generally recognized by Single Taxers. Mayor Pingree of Detroit is one of their idols. I have heard Bolton Hall eulogize him and Dr. Montague Leverson apotheosize him. What does Mayor Pingree say about Tom Johnson? Nothing less than that, when he, the mayor, was trying to take away some of the privileges enjoyed by the street railways of Detroit, their principal owner, Tom Johnson, either bought, or attempted to buy, the votes of the Detroit aldermen. Is that the kind of "clean politics" that the Single Taxers believe in? But perhaps Mayor Pingree lies. I do not vouch for him; I quote him only because he is admired by Single Taxers. But here at least is a fact that is unquestionable. When Tom Johnson was a member of congress, he procured the publication out of the public funds, and the widespread carriage through the mails at public expense, of Henry George's work, "Protection or Free Trade." "Clean politics," this? A clean steal, rather! And every Single Taxer of the individualist stripe knows it for such. Will it be said that this is customary,—that it is a trick played frequently by Republicans and Democrats? Precisely; that is just what I am claiming,—that the "clean" Single Taxers will do in politics just what the dirty Republicans and Democrats do, and that all this boast of "clean politics" is sheer pretence. If the Single Taxers ever have their day, that day will witness—perhaps not in the dawning hours, but some time before sunset—a greedier raid upon a treasury filled to overflowing by an outrageously oppressive tax than was seen when the Republicans "got rid of the surplus." And this will happen in spite of the fact that many of the Single Taxers are men of the highest character. The end of all politics, of whatever stripe, is the seating of thieves at the receipt of custom.

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Incredible as it may seem, there are actually newspapers in the United States which would have the government bar out such Italian immigrants as come here to escape military service and the dangers of African campaigning. Italy is at war with Abyssinia, they say, and needs her sons at home; to run away when their country is in peril is treasonable, and the United States cannot admit criminals and traitors and accept them as citizens. Of course, this is atrocious, from the point of view of long-cherished American principles and traditions. There is no doubt that these newspapers are vicious and ignorant, and a disgrace to the country which has long been an asylum for the victims of the old-world tyranny. But, whether they realize it or not, the view they take is strictly in harmony with the principles laid down by such ethical governmentalists as Mr. Salter. There is parliamentary government in Italy, and the majority has decided in favor of the Abyssinian war. The majority speaks for society, we are told, and those Italians who refuse to obey the command of society and leave the country are criminals of the worst kind. True, the African war is not defensive, and every competent observer outside of Italy knows that it has been a ruinous, unnecessary, and criminal enterprise; but the Italian minority cannot be permitted to decide for itself what war is defensive and necessary, and what purely "political" and jingoistic. If it can overrule the majority in one thing, why not in another? If it can have an opinion of its own in one thing even, and act upon it, the logical end of the process is Anarchism, and the denial of the right of the majority to govern in the name of society. No, the Italian refugees *are* criminals, because Italy—a society, certainly—has said so. Only the Anarchists can defend them without falling into inconsistency.

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Mr. Howells's recent article on "Brotherhood," in the "Century," is much better than anything he has said on sociological topics in a long time. Because it is much better, it is liked less and criticised more. The sentimental critic of the New York "Journal" characterizes it as a violent assault on family ties. What Mr. Howells tries to show is that it is irrational for society to expect men to do more for parents, brothers, or relatives than for friends and sympathetic strangers. We can choose our friends, but we cannot choose our parents and brothers, and the notion that the latter are entitled to our support and assistance in any case, whether we admire and like them or not, is based on exploded doctrines of moral obligation. There is a great deal of truth in this, and Mr. Howells is right in holding that the word friendship ought to be substituted for the word "brotherhood" in the motto "Liberty, Equality, Brotherhood (or Fraternity)." But isn't it inconsistent for a man who resists the pretensions reared on "natural" accidents to admit the claims of utter strangers who have no title at all to our support? As a State Socialist, Mr. Howells would compel us to love all men as friends and work for them without reward. Can the State do more than parents, and choose friends for us? We *can* choose our friends, and the intermeddling of the State has not even the excuse which has too long been accepted from members of the family without protest.

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"The highest interests of mankind," declares the New York "Evening Post," "demand that all men who undertake to overthrow any established government should do so with the halter around their neck." The New York "Recorder" criticises the grammar and the sentiment of this sentence, and reminds the "Post" that the United States owe their independence to a revolution. Would the "Recorder," then, recognize the right to overthrow governments? It is easy to approve of successful past revolutions, but how about the treatment of contemporary rebels and insurrectionists? It is also easy to applaud rebellion in other countries, but how about a revolutionary outbreak in your own? It is utterly impossible for the conservatives to maintain a consistent attitude on the question of revolutions. They have only one test,—success. There is hardly any doubt that, had the south succeeded in seceding, every philistine historian, moralist, and philosopher would now be ready to argue learnedly and confidently that the "highest interest of mankind" demanded secession. The Anarchist alone has a consistent philosophy of history.

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There is much wailing and gnashing of teeth over a decision rendered by a Chicago judge in favor of the bucket-shops. Proprietors and employees of a number of bucket-shops were discharged on the ground that the law which authorizes the existence of the great board of trade also covers these small institutions. Bucket-shops, said the judge, do at retail what the board of trade does at wholesale. The business of the latter is grain gambling; the big speculators buy and sell grain that has no actual existence, and simply bet on the course of trade. Bucket-shop patrons do exactly the same thing on a much smaller scale. It would probably be impossible to frame a law against bucket-shops which would not include the operations of the board of trade. Our newspaper moralists, therefore, must resign themselves to the painful necessity of living alongside of such awful dens of iniquity as the bucket-shops. The only thing they can do for morality is to refuse to advertise these institutions. Few will prove exalted enough in their Christian virtue to make this sacrifice.

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Upon Mr. Bolton Hall's letter in another column I will comment hereafter.

## Liberty, and Why We Want It.

If Comrade Tucker has correctly stated the difference between himself and Dr. Maryson, then I side with Tucker. In other words, if Dr. Maryson's idea is that he wants liberty merely for liberty's sake, then I do not think that is a valid reason, as our reasons must be satisfactory to authoritarians. Speaking for myself, I do not want anything merely for the sake of having it. Any and all of my wants are for self-satisfaction,—to make me happy. My opinion is that *happiness is the aim of every human desire, the goal of every human act.* Art for art's sake; virtue is its own reward; do good because of good; tell the truth for truth's sake; liberty for liberty's sake,—all are the children of error. Let me say again, in the plainest words I know: Every human act has for its object the happiness of the one who does the act.

But I do not understand that Dr. Maryson wants liberty merely for liberty's sake, or to get it by refraining "from giving any reasons, or any but the vaguest." I am not well acquainted with Dr. Maryson's ideas, however, his letter in Liberty of March 21 being the only thing I remember from his pen; but I assume that Comrade Tucker takes this letter as the basis of his difference with the doctor. I have carefully read this letter, and fail to find anything in it to which I can take serious exceptions. It is true, Dr. Maryson does not in this letter give any particular reason for wanting liberty, but I assume that he must have his reason, as I cannot understand anybody wanting anything without having a reason for it, or why he should have any hesitancy in giving it whenever asked for it. I should not expect to have my wants satisfied if I did not give reasons satisfactory to those who have the power to withhold them. As liberty can exist only by mutual agreement, I must give reasons which my fellows deem good before they will agree to grant my claim to liberty.

Comrade Tucker says that the difference between Dr. Maryson and himself "arises over the question of *how* to get Anarchy." I understand this to be practically the same difference stated in another way,—*i. e.*, whether it is best to give reasons or not to give reasons for wanting liberty. When I am asked to give reasons for the advocacy of Anarchy, among others I give this,—that men will then be free to earn their living as they choose, without being dependent upon others. I try to show that interest on money, rent for land, and profit on labor and products are the three essential causes of poverty. There is no happiness in poverty. Therefore poverty should be abolished. Interest can be abolished by mutual banking, rent can be wiped out by making occupancy and use the sole title to land, and profit can be eliminated by unrestricted competition or voluntary coöperation. This reaches the understanding and sympathy of those who are inclined towards individualism. But, if those to whom I am speaking are Communists, I say there is no objection to their being Communists, if they do not compel others to be Communists, too, against their will. They may be able to abolish interest, profit, and rent by having all things in common. Of course, Anarchists, whether Communist or individualist, cannot charge for the use of land, and the Communist cannot deny the right of any one to compete against him and his community in the production and sale of goods or services, because, as soon as he does, he becomes authoritarian. So long as he does not want his liberty for the purpose of invading my liberty, then I am perfectly willing every one should have all the liberty it is possible for him to enjoy.

Yes, there is force in Comrade Tucker's contention that we must give reasons for our wanting liberty. But our reasons may differ very widely, and still be "good" reasons. What would be a good reason to one person may not be the reason for which the other wants his freedom. A lunatic may want his liberty for the purpose of killing some person. In that case he can justly be restrained. But, if he be a harmless lunatic, there is no good reason for denying him the fullest liberty.

The Southern confederacy wanted the liberty to secede from the federal union, because it wanted to continue slavery. It wanted to retain power to invade the rights of others, and it was justly denied that right.

One person may want his liberty to go to church and practise his religious faith. Another may want it to stay away from church and proclaim against all religions. Both are equally good reasons, and yet they are for the purpose of doing wholly unlike things.

One may want liberty to advance the interests of Communism, another to further the cause of individualism and voluntary coöperation.

If it can be shown to the satisfaction of the people (and it must be shown to them before they will accept it) that Anarchism will not dictate to them any explicit rules as to what they must do, but that it opens to them the opportunities of putting into practice their own ideas of enhancing their own happiness, then, it appears to me, real propagation of Anarchism has been made.

Comrade Tucker is right when he says the advocacy of liberty cannot be divorced from "economic" considerations, if the word is used to mean the science which treats of the production and distribution of wealth. But writers who differ very radically in their contentions are called "economists." Were the conclusions of some of these writers put into practice, I think the results would show extravagance instead of economy. The essence of "economics," however, is to learn the processes by which the greatest amount of wealth can be produced with a given amount of effort. These processes can be learned only by experiment. The strongest point to me about Anarchism is that it permits every kind of experiment, not only in the field of "economics," but of every branch of social science. It invites competition in all things. It gives a fair field to all, and permits the best to win. I cannot say that the establishment of liberty will necessarily be followed by the universal application of mutual banks, competition, and private enterprise. And he is rash indeed who dogmatically insists that Communism will be universally applied under Anarchy. I believe the society of the future will be composed of every imaginable kind of associations for the betterment of mankind, and that the competition among them will lead to the survival of the fittest. Given equal freedom, the true need have no fear of being overcome by the false. Indeed, I believe the false contains the elements of its own correction. And this is especially so in "economics."

At the risk of repetition, let me put this matter in still another way. Comrade Tucker says that Dr. Maryson "(1) thinks that those who want liberty for reasons that are totally opposite and contradictory should unite to obtain it, and (2) that in this union and in the prosecution of its work no one should undertake to point out what the results of liberty will be. I hold, on the other hand, (3) that on our ability to show, not to the smallest detail, but clearly and indubitably as to trend, what the results of liberty will be, depends our power to obtain liberty. (4) We shall never obtain liberty unless we can convince at least a considerable minority that liberty is a desirable thing, and no minority will ever believe liberty to be desirable, unless it is shown to them in what way it will benefit them."

(1) I can see no good reason why they cannot unite to obtain liberty, unless, as I have already pointed out, one side wants it for the purpose of doing something that is positively detrimental to the other side. I am willing to join hands with anybody that will help me to free the land from the grasp of the monopolist; that will permit me to trade wherever I choose; that will permit me to use whatever kind of money I want; that will keep his hands off me entirely, so long as I do not attempt an act of aggression.

Anybody is an Anarchist who will agree not to do my person violence, not to take my property without my knowledge and consent, and not to prevent me from doing whatever I choose, unless I choose to do him personal violence, or take his property without his knowledge and consent, or prevent him from doing whatever he chooses. And I ask the assistance of every such person to abolish every law and custom, and, where there is a fair probability of success, to resist every person, that stands in the way of the accomplishment of these aims.

Individualist Anarchist that I am, believing in the economic doctrines advocated by Comrade Tucker, I am ready to join with the Communists, the State Socialists, the Populists, the Democrats, the Republicans, or anybody else, whenever I see an opportunity to gain a larger degree of liberty. You see, I am thoroughly utilitarian and opportunist. Let me give a practical illustration. Some years ago there was submitted to the voters of Michigan an amendment to the constitution prohibiting the manufacture and sale of intoxicating drinks. Notwithstanding the fact that I am a temperance man, believing the saloon is a bad element in society, that it leads to the excessive use of intoxicants, and that its influence is anything but elevating, I joined with the saloon-keepers and others to defeat the amendment, and we were successful. The baneful effects of the saloon I did not consider as bad as the destruction of that much liberty. The prohibition amendment was invasive; the saloon, even with its evil influences, is not. Evidently, the majority of the voters thought it to their benefit to defeat prohibition; but the reasons for doing so were as conflicting and irreconcilable as you could imagine, and as thick as dandelions in the spring time. The great majority of these voters were, of course, authoritarians. If, therefore, an Anarchist could, without violation of any fundamental principle, or without doing violence to anything for which he stands, join with Archists to advance liberty, what can seriously stand in the way of his uniting with other Anarchists who believe in Communism to get more liberty?

(2) Each one must, it seems to me, to have any effect upon those to whom he is appealing, point out what in his opinion will be the results of liberty. To merely state that he wants liberty is to say nothing. The questions inevitably arise: What do you want liberty for? and, What will be the results of universal liberty?

(3) People differ so widely in their notions as to what would result were we to have universal liberty that Anarchists must, to win people to their principles, be able to show "clearly and indubitably" that it would not result in anything positively bad or injurious to society, and that it would be much better than under authority. This must be done to successfully overcome the contention that liberty would lead to murder, rape, robbery, and general retrogression. But there is not this contention between the individualist and Communist wings of Anarchism. There is nothing in either that aggresses the rights of the other. Aggression is the heart of authority. In the sense that Anarchists must show that liberty will not result badly for society "depends our power to obtain liberty."

(4) This is true. But, if the Communists convert a considerable number to Anarchism, and the individualists convert another goodly number to Anarchism, I can see nothing standing in the way of "pooling their issues" on Anarchism pure and simple, and let the economic results to each side take care of themselves.

Comrade Tucker puts his questions in several different ways, and I will answer in several different ways. He asks me to say "(1) whether, in struggling to get liberty, we should sink our differences as to the results of liberty and simply shout 'Give us liberty,' or (2) whether it is of high importance that those of us who think that liberty will work in a certain way should try to show that we are right, and that those who think that it would work in an opposite way are wrong. To take a specific case, (3) does he [Labadie] think it a matter of no consequence, as a method of propagandism, to convince the people that under liberty they will enjoy the benefits of an admirably-perfected tool of exchange free of the burden of interest, and (4) that those who claim that under liberty this tool of exchange will disappear or will bear interest do not understand the operations of free competition."

(1) No; we should not sink our economic differences, any more than I sank my differences with the saloon-keepers while combatting the Prohibitionists.

(2) It is of high importance to be honest. To try to show that our way is the right one is certainly honest. But those whose views upon economics are opposed to ours may be as honest as we are, and it is just as important to them that they try to show that we are wrong. There are so many sides to the human mind that it takes many different kinds of arguments to reach it. What is reasonable to one seems unreasonable to another; what will convert one may not convert another.

(3) I think the financial question of the greatest importance, and I think it is of great consequence to

show that under liberty those who so determine *can*, not *will*, enjoy an admirably perfected tool of exchange free of the burden of interest.

(4) I think it absurd to claim that under liberty there will be no tool of exchange, or that interest is a necessary adjunct to it. Free competition or coöperation would divest it of its interest-producing power. Cost would be the limit of its price. It is, therefore, important to show this. But this would have no weight with a Communist. What need has he of a medium of exchange? In a Communistic society the individual has nothing to exchange; hence, there is no need of money. But those who do not go into Communism will certainly need a medium of exchange, and I believe the mutual bank offers the correct way of making it.

Comrade Tucker, is the ambiguity made clear? If not, I know the keenness of your intellect will see it, and the severity of your logic lay it bare to us.

JOSEPH A. LABADIE.

## The Achievements of Bumble.

[Albert Tarn in Newcastle Chronicle.]

It is well to point out the futility of comparing the relative merits of municipalized and non-municipalized gas by a consideration of prices alone; for there is this important difference between a municipal business and any other,—*i. e.*, that the former can make up any losses by sending the rate-collector round.

Thus the Huddersfield corporation makes up its losses on the tramways by a general rate of 5d. or more in the pound, and precisely the same course is pursued in regard to municipal gas-supply. In 1892 the Glasgow corporation reported a loss of £26,000 on its gas business, and an increase of 3d. per 1,000 in the price of gas was not sufficient to make up the deficiency. A gas company, however, has no source from which to meet losses but the charge for gas and the reserve fund. It is a voluntary association, without power over the purses of the general public. Several corporations have in recent years lost heavily on their gas businesses, owing either to strikes of their own workmen or to strikes in the coal trade, and the corporations have always the power to keep their badly-conducted businesses going out of the general rates. Hence to compare gas prices alone is evidently purposeless. While, however, corporations frequently tax the general public to make up a loss on their gas account, they occasionally use the gas as a means of revenue to make up a deficiency in their general accounts. Thus about five years ago the Nottingham corporation had a deficiency of some £12,000 in its general account, and it sought to partly cover this by increasing the price of gas. Such cases are, however, rare. I think of late years municipalized gas has more often than not been a losing business; and to show how much the public know about these businesses, professedly conducted "in the public interest," I may mention that, when I was in Halifax, there was a long and bitter discussion carried on in the Halifax "Guardian" between the present and past managers of the municipal gas works, each accusing the other of gross mismanagement and waste; but who can decide when officials disagree? The "public interest" principle, when associated with compulsory powers, is not a success. You cannot rely upon efficient work and management without competition, and you can rely upon it still less when absence of competition is united with the power of picking the pockets of the general public.

The water-supply is, on the whole, the most successful business that Bumble has undertaken; but even in this business there are innumerable instances of gross mismanagement and bungling. The corporation of Nelson, in Lancashire, recently discovered that, out of a daily supply of 800,000 gallons, no less than 400,000 to 500,000 gallons were leaking away! Then there was the "Dripping Well" at Eccup near Leeds, the Leicester water-famine, and similar experiences in other towns, the buggy water of Birmingham, the heavy loss of the Brighton corporation, the bungled attempt of the corporation of Richmond (Surrey) to supersede the local water company. What heavy bills and increased rates have resulted from some of our municipal bunglings!

No, the character of Bumble is too well known for us to be deluded into believing in him by a few superficial and distortful facts. Collectivism has never been proved to be an all-round success, and its advocates rely mainly upon the general ignorance and gullibility to promote its miserable cause.

## Single Tax and Land Improvement.

*To the Editor of Liberty:*

You seem to be increasingly worried as to the Single Tax, if I may judge from your printing three columns of Mr. Yarros's attack on Single Tax, and five columns of your attack on Single Taxers.

One does not have to eat a whole egg to find out that it is bad, and I should think that two paragraphs would have made you a little shy of giving Mr. Yarros three columns. He says: "Wherever it is possible to improve land, it is generally improved without the compulsion of the Single Tax." Any one who knows anything about the "Real Estate Business" knows that this is far from the case (surely you know better than that?),—that, on the contrary, wherever low taxes and rapid advances make it more profitable to keep land vacant or partly improved, such is the practice; and the land is everywhere so held.

Mr. Yarros goes on: "How would the Single Tax help labor in England, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, Italy, and France? There is no land speculation in those countries worth mentioning." Mr. Yarros apparently has not heard of the immense fortunes "made" in Berlin and in Paris on the rise of land value, and of the ruin that came to many of the old Italian families from land speculation in Rome. But he ought to have heard of the duke of Westminster's possessions in London, and of the coal mines held idle in England. As to Ireland, I refer him to Henry George's "Land Question."

I am as much surprised at Yarros writing this as at you printing it. I can only explain it on the ground that the Anarchists are extremely hard up for arguments against the Single Tax.

Lest Mr. Salter should think that I have dodged his main cannon-shot, which appears to be that the Single Tax would not free land, I point out that, as Mr. Yarros and Mr. Salter doubtless perceive, the Single Tax would free all land held for any other reason than for immediate use, unless the owner wanted to pay for privileges which he would not use.

I am sorry that the active and pressing work in the Delaware campaign will prevent me, as I know it will prevent Mr. Stephens, from taking up the challenge to debate the Single Tax in the columns of Liberty, because I believe that your readers do average higher as to intelligence than even Single Taxers, and are worth capturing.

After we capture Delaware, we will be glad to re-examine your arguments.

Yours cordially,

BOLTON HALL.

## Anarchist Letter-Writing Corps.

The Secretary wants every reader of Liberty to send in his name for enrolment. Those who do so thereby pledge themselves to write, when possible, a letter every fortnight, on Anarchism or kindred subjects, to the "target" assigned in Liberty for that fortnight, and to notify the secretary promptly in case of any failure to write to a target (which it is hoped will not often occur), or in case of temporary or permanent withdrawal from the work of the Corps. All, whether members or not, are asked to lose no opportunity of informing the secretary of suitable targets. Address, STEPHEN T. BYINGTON, Flushing Institute, Flushing, N. Y.

Why I believe in the Anarchist Letter-Writing Corps:

Fifth reason—because it increases the stock of Anarchistic ideas. The necessity of expressing the Anarchist principles in such a way as to meet the words, or fit the needs, of a given target causes me to think of new aspects of these principles, and thus enriches my Anarchistic education. For instance, Mr. Salter (of the Salter-Yarros discussion) put the substance of his book into a lecture in Boston, which was reported by a Boston paper; and on the occasion of that report I made that paper a target for my section of the Corps. Then, when I came to write my Corps letter to that paper, I reflected that the foundation of Mr. Salter's argument seemed to be in his assertion that we now have government because experience has shown that government defends us against invasion better than could be done in Anarchy. It seemed to me that he ought to be met at this point, and so I began writing to show that the reason why we now have government is nothing of the sort. After I had sent my letter, I kept on thinking of the ideas which had thus been suggested to me, and finally worked them out more fully in my article lately printed in Liberty's editorial columns, "Is Government Justified by Experience?" Thus the result of that target (besides furnishing a four-column editorial for Liberty and getting an excellent letter from another member printed in a Boston daily) was to give me much fuller and clearer ideas about the interpretation of certain historic facts with reference to Anarchist principles than I should have had, if I had not been made to think of these things by having to write about them.

Now, good friend outside the Corps, you who don't join it because you feel that your knowledge of Anarchism is not sufficiently thorough and scientific to qualify you for an expounder of its philosophy, take a lesson from this history. The way to make your understanding of a subject grow is to give it exercise by using it to teach other people. How do you suppose anybody ever learns anything? by working at it, if he learns it so as to be worth anything. It is safe to bet that your ideas of Anarchism never will be thorough and scientific, till you begin to give them out to others; that process will clear them and set them in order wonderfully.

Moral: Join the Corps.

Now, a word to the comrade who writes me as follows:

> DEAR SIR,—Some time ago I joined the Letter-Writing Corps, and ever since I have written letters to the targets assigned to Section B. I have them yet. They were never satisfactory to myself; they were not as I thought yours, or Mr. Labadie's, or Mr. Yarros's, or Mr. Cohen's, or Mr. Tandy's, etc., would be. I desired to be either a credit to the cause, or keep quiet.

I am afraid, comrade, you misunderstand the plan of the Corps. It is not so especially for the prominent and talented ones—though I think it is worth even their help—as for the small men, among whom you modestly class yourself. Of the five whom you name, I, who have no claim to prominence in the movement outside my Corps work, am a regularly writing member; one of the others writes with us irregularly; one was a regular member, but dropped the work on account of the pressure of other work for the cause; one promises to join by and by; and one has made no offer of membership,—past, present, or future. Now, if the great men can't join because they are too busy with the work that has made them great, and the little men won't join because they think it belongs to the great men, what is the Corps for?

As to yourself, I can assure you that the letters you write me seem to me to show the hand of an excellent letter-writer. Furthermore, you will remember that, in your first letter to me, you said you would like a chance to write in German, because you were more familiar with that language than with English; and that about the same time you sent a contribution to Liberty, which was printed in the editorial columns. Being in Liberty's office, I spoke to Mr. Tucker of what you said, and he answered that, if you could write German better than English, you must be a wonder in German, and went on to tell me of your article, which was then being put in type, and to speak in very high terms of the ability displayed—the sort of language Tucker uses when he thinks a thing is really fine, you know. Now, I don't ask you to accept Tucker's and my opinion of your powers unless you choose, but I do hope you will believe that your letters are better than nothing at all, and that ought to be enough to induce you to send them. The purpose of this Corps isn't to show ourselves off; it is to teach the people Anarchism; and, if we mean business with our Anarchism, we shall write whenever our writing will do more good than nobody's writing, whether we show off well or not.

The Corps is not very old yet, but it has already given a fair start to prominence toward more than one of those who sincerely believed they couldn't write. Come on with them. My request to members, in answer to which you send this report, was that each one should inform me of his intention to keep on with the Corps work. Won't you do that, with the understanding that the pledge to write letters means sending them too?

By the way, there are several members who, I am

sure, intend to keep on with their work, but who have not yet answered my request. I had meant to write to them, but have been too busy. Can't some of you save me my postage?

Target, section A.—The "News," Amarillo, Tex. Section B.—The "Argus-Leader," Sioux Falls, S. D. Both papers profess to be ready to print letters expressing the widest range of opinion, whether editorially approved or not. Send letters showing their readers the truth about anything that concerns our cause. STEPHEN T. BYINGTON.

## Making Virtue by Law.

Simple Simon went to look
If plums grew on a thistle;
He pricked his fingers very much,
Which made poor Simon whistle.

You see, little children, we call him "simple," because, when he found that plums could not be procured on that thistle, he merely whistled, instead of explaining it away and going to another thistle.

B. H.

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WANTED, work for the summer, the coming school year, or both, as teacher, librarian, translator, writer, or anything else for which I am competent. I have a thorough knowledge of Greek, Latin, French, and German, a creditable knowledge of Spanish, and enough Italian, Danish, Hebrew, Arabic, and Syriac to be of practical use, besides a smattering of some other languages. I speak no language fluently, but have a correct pronunciation. Other specialties, mathematics and political science. I can show testimonials of scholarship above the average, not only in my specialties, but in nearly all ordinary branches of college study. I have had two and a half years' experience as a teacher, in which I have found that I can do well when I have a boy by himself, but cannot keep large classes in order, unless they are willing to be orderly. My present employer says that he is satisfied with my work. I can begin work under a new engagement at any time after June 15. STEPHEN T. BYINGTON, Flushing Institute, Flushing, N. Y.

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